

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-06 ISO-00 AF-04 ARA-06 EA-06 EUR-12 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /087 W

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R 142351Z NOV 74

FM USMISSION USUN NEWYORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7455

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMCONGEN JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 5048

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UNGA PLO XF

SUBJ: PLO LEADER ARAFAT'S APPEARANCE IN GA

1. IN FOLLOW-UP TO TELEPHONIC REPORT NOV 13 TO IO, DEPT
MAY WISH TO HAVE FOR RECORD SOME OF ATMOSPHERICS OF
ARAFAT'S OPENING DAY OF PALESTINE DEBATE.

2. THE STANDING OVATION USUALLY GIVE TO VISITING SPEAKERS
WAS ONLY PARTIAL SUCCESS IN ARAFAT'S CASE. US, UK AND OTHERS
AGREED IN ADVANCE TO KEEP TO THEIR SEATS AND WERE EMULATED
BY OTHER DELEGATIONS TOTALING 20-25 (EUROPEANS, SCANDS,
SOME LATINS, AUSTRALIA, NZ).

3. THIS ACTION PERHAPS ACAUIRED ADDITIONAL MOMENTUM BECAUSE
OF FLAP THAT PRECEDED ACTUAL OPENING OF SESSION. AS
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DELEGATIONS BEGAN TO ARRIVE, HIGH-BACKED CHAIR USED FOR

APPEARANCES BY CHIEFS OF STATE HAD BEEN PLACED ON DAIS.
THIS WAS CLEAR SIGNAL THAT BOUTEFLIKA INTENDED TREAT ARAFAT
AS CHIEF OF STATE, AS WAS CALCULATED DELAY THAT RESULTED
IN ARAFAT SPEAKING SHORTLY BEFORE NOON AS ONLY ORATOR OF
SESSION. USUN REPS CALLED ANOMALY OF CHAIR TO ATTENTION OF
EUROPEANS, SCANDS AND OTHERS, WITH RESULT THAT PERMREPS
OF AUSTRALIA, AUSTRIA AND SWEDEN MADE IMMEDIATE PROTEST. US
REP TOOK UP ISSUE WITH BOTH SECRETARIAT AND GA PRESIDENCY.
WALDHEIM AND MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF RECOGNIZED IMPROPRIETY
AND WERE READILY PERSUADED BY US THAT SIGHT OF ARAFAT
IN CHAIR WOULD DAMAGE UN IN PUBLIC EYE. WALDHEIM REQUESTED
GA PRESIDENCY TO REMOVE CHAIR, BUT WAS REFUSED. WALDHEIM
MADE IT KNOWN TO PRESS THAT THE CHAIR WAS NONE OF HIS DOING,
THE DECISION AND RESPONSIBILITY BEING BOUTEFLIKA'S.

4. USUN REPS QUICKLY MADE POINT TO SEVERAL ARAB DELEGATES
THAT TREATING ARAFAT LIKE CHIEF OF STATE COULD BE
DAMAGING TO UN, AND TO BEST INTERESTS OF BOUTEFLIKA AND
EVEN PLO. THIS PROBLEM ALSO DISCUSSED WITH SAUDI ARABIAN
REP BAROODY, WHO AFTER PROFESSING NOT EVEN TO BE AWARE OF
CHAIR, WENT TO SYG AND PRESIDENT'S OFFICE. HE RETURNED LATER
CLAIMING CREDIT FOR DEVISING "COMPROMISE". AS IT TURNED OUT,
ARAFAT STRODE DIRECTLY FROM ANTEROOM TO ROSTRUM AND
SUBSEQUENTLY DEPARTED WITHOUT SITTING IN THE CHAIR,
ALTHOUGH AFTER SPEECH HE DRAPED HIS ARM OVER BACK WHILE
ACCEPTING APPLAUSE, ONE ARAB SOURCE TOLD US THAT BOUTEFLIKA'S
STAFF AND OTHERS HAD CONSIDERED ADVISING ARAFAT TO DISREGARD
THE CHAIR BUT THAT NO ONE, INCLUDING BOUTEFLIKA, HAD HAD
THE NERVE TO DO SO.

5. NET EFFECT OF THIS CONTRETEMPS HAS BEEN HEIGHTENED
CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG EUROPEANS, SCANDS, SOME LATINS AND
OTHERS, THAT FLAGRANT DISREGARD FOR TRADITIONS AND
PROCEDURES CAN DAMAGE THE UN. EVEN FRENCH PERM REP DE
GUIRINGAUD TERMED BOUTEFLIKA EFFORT TO GIVE ARAFAT CHIEF
OF STATE HONORS "SHAMEFUL".
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